Hike in Steel Prices

5499. SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether major steel producers have deferred their production due to across-the-board hike in steel prices;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Tata Steel and SAIL have also announced to hike the prices of steel; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to curb the prices of steel ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) to (c) Due to increase in prices of petroleum products and railway freight the main producers of steel, namely : Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) and Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO) have recently revised their prices in August, 1996. However, the main producers have not deferred their production on account of revision of prices.

(d) After de-regulation of pricing and distribution of steel the Government has no role in revision of prices. Main steel producers are themselves fixing prices of their various products, keeping in view input costs and the prevailing market conditions.

However, Government have taken various measures which will help in ensuring that steel products are made available to the consumers at competitive prices. Some of these measures are :

(i) Modernisation and expansion of public sector steel plants have been taken up and creation of additional steel production capacities in the private sector is being encouraged and facilitated. Higher availability of steel from a larger number of steel producers is expected to have a moderating influence on steel prices;

(ii) Reduction of customs duty on imports of raw materials for the steel industry and also on import of capital goods has helped in reducing the production cost of steel manufacturers;

(iii) Import of steel is freely allowed; and

(iv) Reduction of customs duties on import of steel products has reduced the landed cost of imports.

P. F. Contribution

5500. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the total PF contribution has been deposited with PF Commissioner by the M/s. Wings Wear (P) Ltd. New Delhi for the period from August, 1995 to July, 1996;

(b) if so, whether the deposited amount has been credited to the account of the employees;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action taken by the Governemnt against the Company ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Provident Fund money is required to be credited into the account of the employees as and when the same is deposited in the Fund by the employer. As M/s Wings Wear Ltd., has failed to deposit PF dues, the same could not be credited into the accounts of the employees.

(d) Necessary legal and penal action as provided under Section 7A of the EPF & M.P. Act and also under Section 406/409 of the IPC have been initiated to recover the dues outstanding against the defaulting establishment.

Speed Post Service in Karnataka

5501. SHRI ANANTH KUMAR :
SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have not provided adequate number of Speed Post Collection Centres in Karnataka and West Bengal;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to expand this facility during 1996-97 in the above States; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) No Sir, there are adequate number of Speed Post Collection Centres provided in Karnataka and West Bengal on the basis of potentiality and operational feasibility.

(b) Does not arise in view of the reply at (a) above.

(c) and (d) Government has taken a policy of consolidating the existing network of Speed Post instead of its unbridled expansion. A city is brought under National Network of Speed Post only when there is sufficient traffic to make it financially viable and operationally feasible.

Commercial Ties

5502. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the foreign airlines with which Air India has established commercial ties;

(b) the terms and conditions on which the ties have been established; and

(c) the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) A list of foreign airlines with whom Air India has commercial arrangements is given in the statement enclosed.

(b) and (c) The commercial arrangements broadly fall in the following categories :—

(i) *Pool Agreement* : This involves pooling and sharing of revenues on the basis of an agreed formula.

(ii) *Commercial Agreement including code-share arrangement* : This involves payment of cash compensation at an agreed rate for carriage of passengers/cargo or allocation of a block of seats on flights on concessional/free basis. Code-share arrangement also provide for display of the flight number of the non-operating carrier on the block of seats allotted to it.

(iii) Joint Venture Agreement : This involves sharing of profit on joint operations on the basis of an agreed formula.

STATEMENT

LIST OF FOREIGN AIRLINES WITH WHOM AIR INDIA HAS COMMERICAL ARRANGEMENT

POOL AGREEMENT	**COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT**
AEROFLOT	ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES
SINGAPORE AIRLINES	SYRIAN AIR
GULF AIR	BIMAN BANGLADESH
SWISSAIR	AIR TANZANIA
SAUDIA	BRITISH AIRWAYS
KUWAIT AIRWAYS	AIR UKRAINE
MALAYSIAN AIRLINES	K L M
EMIRATES	EGYPT AIR
JOINT VENTURE AGREEMENT	EL AL
GULF AIR	ROYAL JORDANIAN
AIR MAURITIUS	YEMENIA
MALAYSIAN	AIR SEYCHELLES
CODE-SHARE AGREEMENT	TAROM
SAS	AEROFLOT
UNITED AIRLINES	ALYEMDA
	QATAR AIRWAYS

[Translation]

Amount Earmarked for Promotion of Religious Tourism

5503. DR. G.R. SARODE : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the amount earmarked for the promotion of religious tourism during the current plan period, and

(b) the details of amount proposed to be allocated to Maharashtra in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : (a) An amount of Rs. 50 lakhs has been provided in the Annual Plan 1996-97 for the development of pilgrim centres in the country.

(b) Development of Tourism is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments. The Department of Tourism in consultation with States/U.T. Governments identify tourism projects to provide Central financial assistance, subject to the availability of funds and feasibility of the proposals.

[English]

Local Telecom Network in Bombay

5504. SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any proposals from the Government of Maharashtra for development of local telecom network in Bombay during 1995 and 1996;

(b) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken thereon;

(c) if no, action has been taken, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which such proposals are likely to be implemented ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) No Sir.

(b) to (d) Not applicable in view of reply at (a) above.

[Translation]

Licence to Steel Plants

5505. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) the number of small, medium and large steel plants in National Capital Region Delhi, place-wise;

(b) the number of licences issued for the setting up of steel plants during the last three years and the number of applications still pending out of them; and